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COUNTRY Hungary 25X1 REPORT NO. 25X1 208

TOPIC 1. Artillery Division in Ercsi.
 2. Motorized Mortar Artillery Regiment in Komarom.

EVALUATION 25X1 PLACE OBTAINED 25X1

DATE OF CONTENT prior to 18 March 1951

DATE OBTAINED 25X1 DATE PREPARED 11 September 1951

REFERENCES 25X1

PAGES 3 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

REMARKS

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25X1 Artillery Division in Ercsi.

- 25X1 1. Prior to 18 March 1951, the headquarters of the artillery division [redacted] was located in the so called New Barracks in Ercsi (Q 48/N 39). Personalities of the headquarters included Colonel Pinter (fnu), commanding officer, about 50 years old; Junior Lieutenant Garai (fnu), motor transport officer; and Lieutenant Varga (fnu), political officer, about 40 years old. (1)
- 25X1 2. According to drivers from Komarom (P 48/Y 75) who were temporarily detached to the division headquarters, the divisional components included a motorized mortar artillery regiment in Komarom, a motorized mortar artillery regiment in Papa (P 48/Y 30), and two motorized mortar artillery battalions in Miskolc (R 49/J 87) and Salgotarjan (O 49/J 18). (2)

Motorized Mortar Artillery Regiment in Komarom.

3. In late September and early October 1950, the motorized mortar artillery regiment in Komarom was activated by the independent motorized mortar artillery regiment in Gyongyoes (Q 48/J 24) which was directly subordinate to the Defense Ministry at that time and provided the cadres for three new regiments, one of which remained in Gyongyoes.
- 25X1 4. Prior to 18 March 1951, the regiment [redacted] was located in the so called New Barracks, situated on the western perimeter of the city, adjoining the old Cavalry Barracks to the southwest and also referred to as the Klapka Gyorgy Barracks. Prior to 24 October 1950, the regiment consisted merely of the regimental headquarters and its individual sections. On the arrival of the rest of the officers and about 250 recruits on 24 October 1950, the regiment had the following components:
 Regimental headquarters. Its personnel included Captain Antal Stranchl, regimental commander, about 40 years old, a former mine worker; Miklos Varadi, adjutant, about 30 years old, an ex-NGO; Senior Lieutenant Pal Farkas, observation officer; Senior Lieutenant Denes Vegh, political officer, a former weaver, transferred to Balatonbogar (Y 4/V 70) in February 1951; an operations officer; a personnel officer; Sergeant Pinter (fnu), whose former designation D-officer was converted into counterintelligence officer on 1 March 1951; a billeting officer; and

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Sergeant Gyula Haromszeki, officer in charge of classified material.

Rear echelon. The rear echelon headquarters was commanded by Lieutenant Miklos Penyochazi, assisted by a deputy who also was in charge of the clothing supply section, and a clerk. The motor transport section of this headquarters was headed by Junior Lieutenant Jozsef Gergely; staffed with one motor-vehicle maintenance NCO, an NCO in charge of fuel supply, an unidentified number of mechanics and 12 drivers; and equipped with 17 weapon carriers, three Raba-Super vehicles, one GAZ vehicle and one motorcycle. The ordnance section, headed by Junior Lieutenant Gyoergy Sziklai, included an armorer-artificer, a shop foreman, an NCO in charge of ordnance and ammunition storage, and ten participants in a 10-month course for armorer-artificers. The payroll section was headed by Junior Lieutenant Oedoen Loarentei, who was assisted by a deputy. The ration supply section was headed by Junior Lieutenant Jozsef Szegvari and included a deputy and four cooks. The clothing supply section included shoemakers and tailors. The signal communications section was headed by Senior Lieutenant Imre Susan and included a deputy, an NCO and four EM. The medical section was headed by Major Sandor Kiss, M.D. There was also one additional headquarters commander.

1st Battalion. The battalion was commanded by Lieutenant Bertalan (fnu), and consisted of the headquarters, including the battalion commander, the adjutant, the political officer and the first sergeant; and one battery, including a headquarters, one mortar platoon equipped with four 120-mm mortars, one observation platoon, and one signal-communications platoon.

2nd and 3rd Battalions. They were commanded by Senior Lieutenant Gyoergy Agocs and Senior Lieutenant Bakai (fnu), respectively, and organized like the First Battalion. (3)

The Regimental headquarters battery. The battery consisted of a headquarters, an observation platoon, and a signal communication platoon. In this T/O, the regiment numbered 21 officers, 7 NCOs and 272 EM. The troops wore red service color and branch insignia of three balls topped by two crossed gun barrels.

5. According to the T/O as of 18 March 1951, the regiment was one of the category B units, each battalion of which had one battery only. The regiment was expected to be converted into a category A unit and to be brought up to strength in October 1951. In this case the regiment was to retain direct control of the motor-vehicle repair shop only, and the motor vehicles assigned to the regiment at headquarters in March were to be distributed to the individual battalions. Source knew that category C regiments also existed. In February 1951, the regiment had to detach 27 drivers to the Miskolc motor transport training center. According to the armorer-artificer, the regiment was to be equipped with 40 more mortars, in addition to the 12 then available.
6. On 1 March 1951, about 300 men of the 1915 through 1922 classes were assigned to the regiment. The troops, the majority of whom had combat experience, were billeted in the former Zirc (P 48/Y 60) abbey, which also served as billets for reservists of units of other branches. The troops were to be trained by a training group detached to Zirc from the regiment in Komarom.
7. Although all soldiers of the regiment had been equipped with Soviet model M-48x7.62-mm rifles in September 1950, the regiment was supplied, in February 1951, with Hungarian-made rifles stamped with the number 1950 as year of manufacture and differing from the Soviet-made ones only by the Hungarian coat of arms replacing the hammer - and - sickle emblem. Officers and NCOs were armed with both Hungarian-made and Soviet-made pistols, the Hungarian pistol differing from the Soviet one only by the arrangement of the rammer installed in a guide below the barrel. Only the battalions were equipped with a very limited number of Soviet-made submachine guns with drum magazines. These

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units had 120-mm mortars which were mounted on single-axle carts with rubber tires and towed by motor vehicles. (4)

8. Basic training took place from 24 October to 24 December 1950. Training at battery level was started at the end of December and still continued on 18 March 1951. Two-day exercises with the entire regiment participating were held six or seven times. From 3 to 9 February 1951, maneuvers, in which also troops of infantry, tank and artillery units took part, were held around Kiskorocs (Y 6/N 52) with all the participating units being equipped with light infantry weapons only. No action took place during the day. Changes of position, motor transports, and ration distribution all took place at night. According to the motor transport officer, summer maneuvers required that the regiment be transferred to Tamasi (Y 5/B 29) in the spring of 1951 for six months. During the training period starting in October and still continued on 18 March 1951, only one record practice with rifles was held. No record firing with mortars had been held prior to that date.
9. The food issued to the EM was poorly prepared and insufficient, the daily ration allowance being as low as 6 Forints per head. However, the meals in the officers' mess, where officers and NCOs both dined, were good. The mess was operated by civilians, and included women cooks and waitresses.
10. Discipline in the officers' corps was poor. Officers and NCOs were forbidden to carry pistols while off duty, as a result of several shootings which had occurred in restaurants. When the regiment was activated in the fall of 1950, officers and NCOs were told that they formed one social class and had to call one another "thou" and to cooperate as close friends in building up the army. NCOs participated in the officers' meetings. Actually, however, the NCOs only took part in the first officers' meeting. The intimate addressing privilege was gradually abolished by the officers. Since numerous officers had been appointed merely on the grounds of their political reliability, officers and enlisted specialists frequently had violent disagreements due to technical differences in opinion, resulting in a deterioration of discipline. In an effort to improve discipline officers of the Defense Ministry checked the units frequently and occasionally stayed for a whole week. Officers whose units repeatedly displayed either bad discipline or an insufficient state of training were replaced, being reduced in rank by one or two grades simultaneously. The names of those officers reduced in rank were published in the Hungarian Armed Forces gazette.
11. A technical unit and a light AA battery were also located in the Klapka Gyoergy Barracks in Komarom, the leader of the technical unit being in charge of the barracks installation. (5)

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Comments.

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- (1) This is the first report on the artillery division in Ercsi.
- (2) Previous reports stated that artillery units were located in Komarom, Papa and Miskolc.
- (3) A previous report mentioned one Captain Bakai (Inu) as the commanding officer of the 1st Battalion of the artillery regiment in Papa.
- (4) It is believed that the mortars were 120-mm Soviet models.
- (5) An AAA unit has been observed in Komarom since February 1951.

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